

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 02756 091306Z

51

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 EUR-25

EA-11 EB-11 COME-00 INT-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIEP-02

FEA-02 SCI-06 ACDA-19 SAM-01 IO-14 CCO-00 SSO-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2826

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TAGS: PFOR, LE

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION

1. BEIRUT PAPERS COMMENT EXTENSIVELY ON GROMYKO'S TALKS IN DAMASCUS AND CAIRO. ONE PAPER ALSO COMMENTS ON PRESIDENT'S NEWS CONFERENCE AND CITES IT AS JUSTIFICATION FOR LIFTING OIL EMBARGO.

2. ON GROMYKO'S TALKS, LEADING INDEPENDENT AN-NAHAR WRITES: "SOVIET ACCEPTANCE OF WASHINGTON TALKS MAKES GROMYKO'S EFFORTS COMPLEMENTARY TO KISSINGER'S.... NOW, IS IT IN INTEREST OF SUPERPOWERS TO THREATEN ARABS OR TO BEFRIEND THEM? AMERICA THREATENS THEM WITH SUSPENDING OR SLOWING DOWN ITS PEACEEFFORTS IF THEY DO NOT LIFT EMBARGO. IT HAS THREATENED TO CUT OFF FOOD SUPPLIES FROM THEM FOLLOWING FAILURE OF ITS THREAT TO USE FORCE. AS FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 02756 091306Z

RUSSIA, IT HAS ARMS; IF ARABS REVERSE THEIR POSITION, IT

CAN OF COURSE STOP SUPPLYING THEM. AS FOR FRANCE, BRITAIN, JAPAN, AND WEST GERMANY, THEY DO NOT EVEN THINK OF POSSIBILITY OF ANTAGONIZING ARABS. INSTEAD, THEY ... ARE CAREFUL TO MAINTAIN THEIR FRIENDSHIP. THUS, NO WEAPON AFFECTS ARABS EXCEPT ROLE OF AMERICA IN PRESSURING ISRAEL AND ROLE OF RUSSIA IN SUPPLYING ARMS. AT PRESENT, THESE TWO ROLES ARE COMPETING HARMONIOUSLY, IF NOT TO PLEASE ARABS, AT LEAST TO BEFRIEND THEM. THEREFORE, DETERMINING FATE OF OIL EMBARGO WILL BE ONE OF MOST MOMENTOUS OF CONTEMPORARY ARAB DECISIONS. UP TO NOW, ARABS HAVE NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY CONVINCED THAT EMBARGO SHOULD BE LIFTED. PERHAPS EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA, WHICH ARE CALLING FOR LIFTING OF EMBARGO, HAVE OBTAINED WHAT IS REQUIRED, NAMELY, AMERICAN GUARANTEE OF FULL WITHDRAWAL."

3. PRO-WEST AL-HAYAT WRITES: ""SOVIET FONMIN'S VISIT RELATES NOT SO MUCH TO MIDEAST CRISIS AS TO SOVIET INTERESTS THEMSELVES. NOTHING INDICATES THIS BETTER THAN EMPHASIS OF JOINT COMUNIQUE ISSUED AFTER VISIT TO CAIRO ON TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION BETWEEN EGYPT AND SOVIET UNION. THOSE WHO REMEMBER PHASE IN WHICH THIS TREATY WAS CONCLUDED AND HOW PRESIDENT SADAT ONCE REVEALED HIS RESENTMENT OF CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LED TO ITS IMPOSITION ON EGYPT MIGHT EASILY CONCLUDE THAT EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT WAS NOT ONE WHO TOOK INITIATIVE TO REFER TO IT. ADD TO THAT THE COMMUNIQUE'S INISTENCE ON NECESSITY OF SOVIET PARTICIPATION IN ALL PHASES OF CRISIS SETTLEMENT AND ALSO IN WORKING COMMITTEES FORMED BY GENEVA CONFERENCE, AND IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT VISIT WAS MEANT ONLY TO SAVE WHAT CAN BE SAVED OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AREA."

4. INDEPENDENT AL-BAYRAQ WRITES: "SOME VIEW ROLE PLAYED BY GROMYKO BETWEEN CAIRO AND DAMASCUS AS RETURN TO STRUGGLE FOR INFLUENCE BETWEEN U.S. AND SOVIET UNION IN MIDEAST. OTHERS BELIEVE IT INVOLVES ATTEMPT TO EXCLUDE STATES OF WESTERN EUROPE, ESPECIALLY FRANCE, FROM AREA AND TO LIMIT 'RIGHT' OF SOLVING CRISIS TO WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF AGREEMENT REACHED ON CEASEFIRE BETWEEN BREZHNEV AND NIXON. BUT MAJOR FACT REMAINS, NAMELY, THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 BEIRUT 02756 091306Z

SYRIA WILL RESUME FIGHTING IF AMERICA'S EFFORTS FAIL OR IF IT ALIGNS ITSELF, AS USUAL, WITH ISRAEL. IN SUCH A CASE, SYRIA WOULD BE IN NEED OF SOVIET WEAPONS AS ONE OF EFFECTIVE MEANS OF LIBERATING ITS LANDS. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT MR. GROMYKO RECOGNIZED THIS RIGHT -- SYRIA'S RIGHT TO ACQUIRE ARMS AND RESUME FIGHTING -- CLEARLY. JOINT COMMUNIQUE HAS EMPHASIZED THAT MOSCOW DOES NOT WANT TO BE ABSENT FROM SCENE."

5. COMMENTING ON PRESIDENT'S NEWS CONFERENCE, PRO-WEST
AL-JARIDA WRITES: "PRESIDENT NIXON'S PLEDGE THAT U.S. WILL
USE ITS INFLUENCE TO GREATEST POSSIBLE DEGREE TO ACHIEVE
SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT IN GOLAN ... IS FIRM AMERICAN
GUARANTEE TO SYRIA THAT ITS LANDS OCCUPIED
BY ISRAEL WILL BE RETURNED TO IT. IT IS ALSO FIRM
GUARANTEE TO ARAB OIL-PRODUCING STATES THAT PROGRESS ON
DIPLOMATIC FRONT IN MIDEAST MUST INEVITABLY
HAVE CONSTRUCTIVE EFFECT ON ARAB OIL EMBARGO AGAINST U.S.
THIS AMERICAN PLEDGE IS NEW AND CLEAR AMERICAN REQUEST
TO ARAB LEADERS ON EVE OF THEIR OIL CONFERENCE.... ARABS
ASK GUARANTEES OF AMERICA BEFORE GIVING IT OIL. AMERICA
HAS PRESENTED THEM BEFORE EYES AND EARS OF WORLD....
AMERICAN HAS SPOKEN. IT IS NOW ARABS' TURN TO SPEAK."
GODLEY

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